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STATE FOR AF/W
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/29/2015
TAGS: PREL PGOV NI
SUBJECT: BAYELSA GOVERNOR'S IMPEACHMENT MOVES FORWARD

REF: LAGOS 1811

Classified By: Management Officer Matthew Spivak for Reason 1.4 (D)

SUMMARY

¶11. (U) The Bayelsa State House of Assembly suspended four assemblymen for improper activities, and directed Chief Judge Emmanuel Igoniwar to form a panel to investigate the charges listed in Governor Alamieyeseigha's impeachment notice. The House also voided Governor Alamieyeseigha's replacement of the House Clerk, and stated Deputy Governor Goodluck Jonathan was recognized as acting governor while Alamieyeseigha's 120-day leave of absence continues. Alamieyeseigha's spokesman denounced the House actions as unconstitutional.
End summary.

HOUSE SUSPENDS FOUR MEMBERS, EMPOWERS CHIEF JUDGE
TO INVESTIGATE IMPEACHMENT

¶12. (U) The fifteen pro-impeachment members of the Bayelsa State House of Assembly met under tight security for just over an hour on Tuesday to advance the impeachment of Governor Diepreye Alamieyeseigha. The Assemblymen suspended four of the five assemblymen who had initially endorsed the impeachment but later claimed coercion by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The four were suspended indefinitely for acting "...dishonorably by their covert and overt acts and utterances." There was no explanation for why only four of the five assemblymen were suspended. Once passed, the suspension reduced the number of voting Assemblymen from twenty-four to twenty, so the fifteen pro-impeachment members now had the required two-thirds majority to move ahead. The House immediately then empowered Chief Judge Igoniwar to investigate the impeachment of Governor Alamieyeseigha. Deputy Speaker Bright Erewari introduced the motion and noted the constitutional basis for their actions.

HOUSE AFFIRMS DEPUTY GOVERNOR IS ACTING
GOVERNOR, REINSTATES CLERK

¶14. (U) The House also rescinded an action taken by the Governor on Monday. Alamieyeseigha had put Clerk of the House Peter George on compulsory leave, appointing Phillip Ere as acting clerk. However, on Tuesday the House declared the Governor's action null and void as it violated of the Bayelsa State House of Assembly Act. House Speaker Peremobowei Ebebi further stated that the House did not recognize Alamieyeseigha's actions as governor since the 120-day leave of absence he requested two weeks ago was still in force, making Deputy Governor Goodluck Jonathan acting governor.

¶15. (U) The Governor's spokesman Preye Wariowei quickly condemned the House's actions, stating the suspension of the four anti-impeachment assemblymen did not follow House rules and the direction to the Chief Judge violated the impeachment process proscribed by the constitution.

¶16. (C) Comment: The House's actions are further evidence of State and Federal Government determination to remove Alamieyeseigha from office. End comment.
BROWNE